

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 SANAA 000492

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SCUL](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#) [YM](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR HULL'S INTERVIEW WITH AL-AYYAM

Translated text of Ambassador Hull's Arabic Interview with Al-Ayyam. Other aspects of the Ambassador's March 9-10 visit to Aden reported reftel.

Begin Text:

"Q: We have learned that today you visited various places in Aden which have received U.S. assistance. Could you please tell us what kind of assistance was given?

A: Of course, my visit to Aden has two objectives, the first one focuses on development and the other one focuses on security. We started today to focus on development, including the assistance for manufacturing school furniture for schools all over the Republic of Yemen. We visited a school furniture factory in Mualla, Aden. We highly appreciate the efforts of all partners and the efforts of Yemeni workers. I think the factory currently employs about 700 Yemeni workers. In addition to that, we visited the branch of the Yemen Women,s Union that has now a computer lab to provide training. No doubt, the Union provides great service to Yemeni society and Yemeni women, especially the new generation. Our efforts will continue in Yemen to assist Yemeni governorates, including Aden.

Q: Does this assistance come within U.S. policy to support Yemeni civil society institutions?

A: Yes, we have a partnership with the Yemeni government and with civil society institutions.

Q: Let,s now move to the security side. The United States is currently training Yemeni coast guards. It installed observation systems in strategic locations in Aden city. How is this security cooperation going, and what can we expect in the near future?

A: We believe that there is a link between development and security. There is no development without security and no security without development. Therefore, I believe that our efforts regarding the Yemeni Coast Guard are very important. We, at present, are working with two objectives. The first one is to train the new coast guard cadres and the second one is to provide boats and necessary equipment for the Coast Guard. We want to benefit from our visit (to Aden) to find locations for the Coast Guard and also locations for workshops that can serve the Coast Guard in the future.

Q: What is the number of the trainees who were sent to the U.S.? Will you send more groups?

A: I think the first group of cadres was about 20 persons. They are now studying English in Yemen. After they learn the language, there will be training in the United States.

Q: How do you evaluate Yemen,s efforts in counter-terrorism?

A: I think Yemen is in the lead among states in counter-terrorism. No doubt, this was achieved thanks to the policy of President Ali Abdullah Saleh and the cooperation of the Yemeni people. We recently noticed a concrete and important progress in that regard. I think Yemen now, from the terrorism side, is much safer than it was in the past. I believe that by continuing more efforts in the future, we will see stability and security in this country.

Regarding the security of the southern part of the Red Sea, there are many naval vessels that belong to the U.S., Germany, and Spain. They all set out from Djibouti. Is there a trend for using Aden seaport as well?

A: I think it is possible to use Aden seaport if that is acceptable by the Yemeni government. At present we use the Port of Djibouti. No doubt that Aden seaport is excellent and suitable for use, but it is up to the Yemeni government.

Q: Regarding Iraq, the U.S. Administration is now trying to get a new resolution passed by the U.N. Security Council. There is opposition from many countries in the Council. How do you view the issue of the new resolution?

A: The new resolution is presented by the U.K. It is supported by Spain and the U.S. We believe that it is useful to be discussed by the Security Council. No one can predict the result of that debate. However, it is good that such issues will be discussed in full in the Security Council.

Q: Don't you believe that the rejection of that resolution or its failure by veto could form a threat to the legal cover that resolution No. 1441 provides?

A: I do not think so. Resolution No. 1441 and the previous ones state clearly commitments on the Iraqi government to get rid of its weapons of mass destruction fully and immediately. It is clear that the recent reports of al-Baradei and Blix indicated that the Iraqi government did not comply. So, we believe that we have sufficient legal cover to go to military action without any other resolutions.

Q: As a Yemeni and an Arab, how can I trust U.S. allegations?

A: I think we should review the history. We faced a lot of problems in the past. Afghanistan and the terrorism coming from it were a problem of the international community. We had a great challenge regarding the Muslims in Kosovo who were being persecuted. If we go further into the past, to the Second World War and the great suffering in Europe and Asia. I think in all these cases, the U.S. played a leading role in facing those challenges. In Europe, during the Second World War, in the former Yugoslavia, in Kosovo and the suffering of Muslims there. And finally, the suffering of the Afghans as a result of the Taliban rule. If you review the situation today in all those places, people in Germany, Kosovo, Japan, and in Afghanistan are enjoying a much better life as a result of the effective leadership of the United States. Therefore, we should be judged by our record.

Q: Do you mean that the Iraqi people will be in a better situation after the changing of the regime in Baghdad?

A: Yes. No doubt the Iraqi people are a talented and educated people and Saddam's government has caused lots of suffering to the Iraqi people and to the peoples of the region. The Iraqi people have been suffering for three decades from the evil of Saddam Hussein's regime. The evidence of that is that many people from Arab states, Europe, and America can see university professors, doctors, and the elite of the Iraqi people who were forced by the Baghdad regime to leave their homeland and work in those countries as barbers, taxi-drivers, and restaurant workers. I am sure that the citizens of this Arab state will bear responsibility for the developmental reconstruction that will change Iraq within a few years. Those people were prevented from living in dignity. It is enough for us to recall our memory regarding Saddam Hussein's use of chemical weapons against his people in Halabja and against his neighbors. That can make us realize that Iraq and the region will be in a better situation without that regime.

Q: Do you think that overthrowing the Iraqi president's regime and the establishment of a democratic state will lead to the spread of democracy and freedom in the region?

A: I think that we have to know that Arab states and the Arab people are now undergoing a number of democratic experiences. If you think what is going on in Yemen regarding the upcoming elections, political pluralism, free press, and the ability of papers such as al-Ayyam to publish reports, I think we have to admit that there is a democratic activity that exists in this part of the world. I do not believe that this democratic activity has arrived in Iraq. In the last elections in Iraq, Saddam Hussein got 100% of the votes. What I think is that the opportunity will be given to the Iraqi citizens soon to create their own democracy. I am confident that this talented and educated people will add a great experience in that regard for the efforts of many (states/nations) in the region.

Q: With regard to Yemen as a U.S. friend and ally, what does the U.S. expects from Yemen in the coming conflict with the Iraqi regime?

A: We expect that Yemen will seek to achieve its national interest. I think that this is up to the Yemeni government to decide. I am certain that President Saleh and his government will do that. As for us, we wish that our cooperation with Yemen continue in the fields of development and security because we believe that those fields serve the interests of the U.S. and Yemeni people.

Q: Some people say that America will enter Iraq to control its oil?

A: With regret, the Iraqi people did not benefit from the oil which was discovered in 1928. Iraq is the first Arab oil state. Yet, Iraqi oil should not be for Moscow, Washington, London, Paris, or any other state, but it is for the people of Iraq. This has not yet happened, but it will happen soon.

Q: Many people accuse the U.S. of neglecting the Palestinians and their suffering. What do you think?

A: I believe that the nations of the Middle East are still

worried about developments in Palestine. President Bush reiterated his policy recently that the aim of our efforts is to establish an independent and democratic Palestinian state that lives peacefully side-by-side with Israel. We have a road map, that leads us to that result. This map is not the idea of the U.S. only, but it is also the idea of Europeans, Russians, and the U.N. I believe that now we must put this map in effect so that we reduce violence both on the Israeli and Palestinian sides. We also must work towards providing more security and a better life for the Palestinians. President Bush said clearly that this is very important to the U.S. government."

HULL